

GRANDFATHER'S
STORIES
IN RHYME



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GRANDFATHER'S
STORIES IN RHYME

By

W. B. W.

A. D. 1900

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Dedication

TO MY GRANDCHILDREN.

*My little boys, I like your noise—
'Tis sound most sweet my ears to greet ;
Then come this way and make a stay,
Increase my joys, my little boys.
The cat may purr when smoothed its fur,
And roosters crow the best they know,
The dog may bark, loud sing the lark,
Yet best your noise I like, my boys.
Tho' bees may hum, woodpeckers drum,
Screech loud the owls, cackle the fowls,
Tho' cows may low, and winds may blow,
Give me your noise, my little boys.
A darksome day, when you're away,
Needs you about with merry shout,
To cheer the way, make bright the day,
Dispel the blues while sad I muse
And miss your noise, my little boys.
And you, my girls, a string of pearls.
Winsome and bright, with hearts so light,
And laughter gay in guileless way,
To me you're dear, now life is sere.
Tho' less your noise than marks my boys,
You have a place of sweeter grace,
And with the boys give added joys.
So to you all, both great and small,
I now indite, if they invite,
These homely rhymes, on former times,
When young like you, a boy I grew.*

W. H. N.



THE YELLOW DOG.

When grandpa was a little boy
Full sixty years ago,
One winter's day, he thought he'd play
Upon the frozen snow.
But how without a sled could he
Go coasting on the hill?
And all alone he tried to find
Some thing its place to fill.
Now your papa has been so kind
Your hearts have never bled
To think you'd have to play in snow
Without a pretty sled.
But grandpa lived in earlier days
Where boys were not so blest,

And had to try some other way
To have the fun in quest.
No playmate had your grandpa then,
He sallied out alone,
Determined to enjoy himself
Without a sigh or moan.
He thought it would be very nice
Upon the slippery hill,
To something have to ride upon
With joy his heart to fill.
He thought and thought, and looked around,
If so he might espy
A thing his purpose to fulfill—
Adown the hill to fly.
Then underneath a little shed,
He found a short smooth board,
Just big enough to sit upon
The pleasure to afford.
'Twas afternoon, the board he seized,
A shingle it was called,
And hied him to the slippery hill
Happy, and unappalled.
On top the hill he laid his board
And sat upon it straight,
He gave a kick, and down the hill
He slid a lively rate.
The bottom reached, he took his board
Atop the hill again,

And up, and down, he gaily went
Till day began to wane.
He noticed it was getting dark,
He laid his board away,
And started for his pleasant home,
Much as he'd liked to stay.
By time he reached his father's barn,
Real dark it did appear;
Your grandpa was a timid lad
And he began to fear.
It only was a little way
To reach the kitchen now,
But what stood in the path to it
So like a big bow-wow?
He stopped quite still, though cold the air,
And thought, what shall I do?
I'm here, and see the kitchen lights,
And people there in view.
So don't you think 'twas wise in him
To shout a loud halloo?
"Halloo!" he said, but no one heard
When first he thus had cried
So louder still, he shouted it
And then they heard inside.
Then Henry opened wide the door
To learn who shouted so
And finding whom it was, he cried
"Suppose you let us know

Why you stand calling there so loud
Upon the frozen snow?"

Then grandpa said, "I'm 'fraid to come
For there 'twixt you and me
Is a great ugly yellow dog
As you must plainly see."

Then Henry said, "I see no dog,
Come run along to me."

Then grandpa said, "I know there is,
'Tis plain as plain can be."

Then Henry came right past the dog,
Nor seemed to fear at all,
And took your grandpa by the hand
And led him on withal.

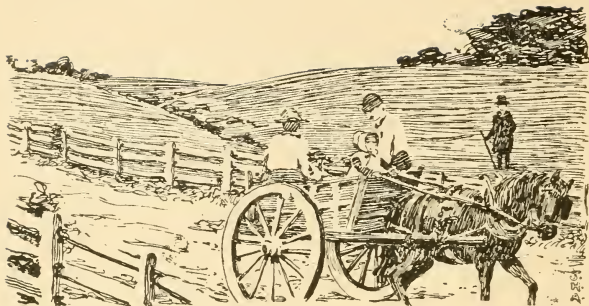
Right by that dog they passed along,
No growl or bark it gave;
But grandpa soon the reason found
Why Henry was so brave :

For would you think, that fearful dog
Your grandpa thought he saw,
Was but a red wheelbarrow there,
That touched his heart with awe.

He was somewhat ashamed to find
He had been so deceived,
But by a warm and blazing fire
He soon was quite relieved.

His hands and feet and ears were warmed,
His supper then he ate,

He kissed his pa, and then his ma,
And went to bed quite late.
No doubt he slept a solid sleep
Till heard the roosters crow,
When up he bounced again to play
Upon the frozen snow.



THE SUN BONNET.

A boy in sun-bonnet,
You may depend on it,
Feels sheepish and shy as can be.
Your grandpa is witness,
Who felt its unfitness,
When but a small fellow was he.
His mother so loved him
She purposely clothed him
To save his complexion and clothes;
Nor knew a boy hated
To be so instated,
And dressed in a way that he loathes.
A little sun-bonnet
His head must have on it,
An apron to shield him from dirt,

Then he could go playing,
In sunshine go straying,
And not suffer sun-burn or hurt.
Your grandpa submitted,
Though feeling unfitted
To meet any stranger that came,
And ran into hiding,
There closely abiding
Until way was opened again.
Your grandpa loved driving,
And always was striving
For chances to manage a horse,
Nor ever omitted,
When he was permitted,
To ride in a wagon, of course.
When Prince was put to it,
Sure was he to do it,
And take up the lines for a start.
And with your attention,
At once I will mention
How thus he was caught in a cart.
Now, never was chappie
Than grandpa more happy,
When once, in a cart with the men,
He had on his bonnet
Nor thought a word on it,
Nor dreamed to be caught in it then.
Now Prince he admired

And never was tired
Of viewing the bonny black beast ;
 No thought that a stranger
 His joy would endanger
Did trouble his heart in the least.
 But, lo ! Jimmy Glover,
 Drew nigh in the clover
Field close by the side of the lane;
 Though slowly he gat on
 With broad brim-ed hat on,
As he walked with a very long cane.
 “ Look ! there’s Jimmy Glover
 Right near in the clover,”
Said one of the men in the cart.
 Then grandpa, his bonnet,
 Pulled hard the strings on it,
But couldn’t the bonnet-strings part.
 At once he stopped driving
 As closely arriving
He took Jimmy Glover in view,
 When flatly he got him
 Down on the cart’s bottom,
The only thing that he could do.
 There lying he waited
 Till Jimmy vacated,
When finished his talk with the men,
 Then cautiously rising,
 Resumed exercising
The pleasure of driving again.



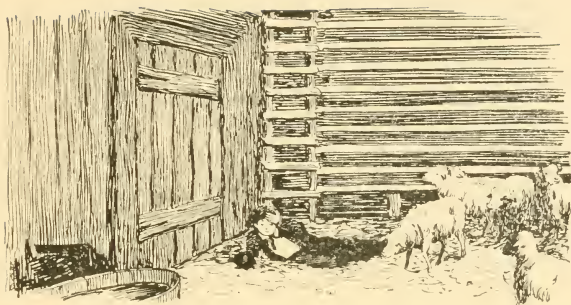
A SLEIGH RIDE.

A sleigh-ride in my earlier days
Was an especial treat,
Though cold the air, and scant the wraps,
And cushionless the seat.
I now recall a thrilling ride
Had on a winter's day,
Which so impressed my memory
It lingers there to stay.
Then brightly rose the morning sun,
Snow covered all the ground,
The sleighing good and cold the air,
Oh, how my heart did bound
To find my father was prepared,
If mother wished to go,

To see her sister then in town,
By sleighing through the snow.
My mother and her Cousin R.
Approved of such a course,
So father to the sleigh hitched up
Old Bob, his favorite horse.
A lot of good things then we took
From out our ample store,
The rich proceeds of slaughtered swine
Killed several days before ;
Some sausages and tenderloins,
And other savory meat,
Which to our city friends we knew
Would be a welcome treat.
I snuggled in between the two,
My mother and her guest,
While father stood in front to drive
And see the way the best.
How cheerily the sleigh bells rang
While we pursued our way,
And echoed through the leafless woods,
Words fail me now to say.
It was to me a jolly ride
Clear to the river's shore,
Where we expected in a boat
Then to be ferried o'er.
But lo, the river out of sight
Beneath both ice and snow

Looked like a level whitened plain,
Where, passing to and fro,
Were sleds, and sleighs, and passengers,
All moving in a line ;
And viewing this, we too drove on,
And thought it would be fine.
We sped along upon the ice
And soon the city gained,
And made our visit to my Aunt,
Where we to dine remained.
When came the time to start for home,
Once more within the sleigh,
We strove again the ice to cross
Before the close of day.
The river reached, adown the slip,
And on the ice once more,
We little dreamed what would befall
Ere reached the other shore.
But Bob, then moved by some affright,
Just what, I cannot tell,
Began to run with all his might,
And naught his speed could quell.
My father stood and tightly drew
The lines with all his force,
While air-holes closely were approached
By his unruly horse.
The wind was strong, and father's hat
Soon flew from off his head,

And then his wig, unloosened there,
 Flapped up and down, and fled.
My father's cloak the wind stretched out
 Much like a comet's tail,
And we, poor things, within the sleigh,
 Were stricken deathly pale.
But this mad chase came to an end,
 With no one hurt the least,
As father guided towards a wharf
 His very headstrong beast.
This checked his wild career so much
 A man his bridle seized,
And Bob, at length his temper cooled,
 Was settled down appeased.
Thus stopped, about us came a crowd
 To see how we had fared,
And gratulations kindly gave
 That we our lives were spared.
My father's wig a friendly hand
 Gave back to him again,
Another tendered him his hat
 Found on the icy plain.
Thus put once more in moving trim,
 We started on our way,
And reaching soon our happy home,
 Closed an eventful day.



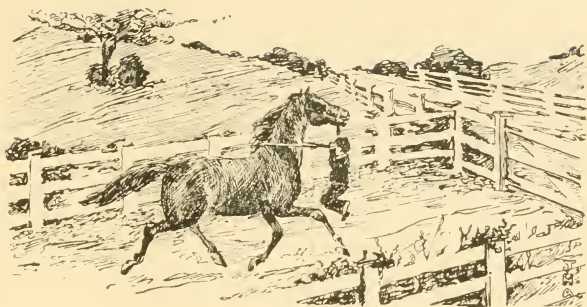
UPS AND DOWNS.

I had my ups, I had my downs,
Like any other boy,
I had my play, I had my work,
Nor was it always joy:
But now the several hurts I had
Are paining me no more,
And many pleasant memories
Loom up my mind before.
And if I tell a tragic tale
And note a little woe,
Just recollect it cites the past,
And ended long ago.
I then had caring for the sheep,
And fed them every day,

And 'mongst the duties that I did,
Was furnish them with hay.
When'er I oped the sheep-house door,
They gladly welcomed me,
And bleated out their hungry wants
As best they could decree.
At first I let them quench their thirst
With water from the well,
Which I had pumped with many strokes,
Till tired I befel.
All in a row before the trough
They put their noses in,
And when they'd drank, I shoo'd them back,
To stay the pen within.
Then came the time to give them hay,
Which once I thought to do,
And up the mow I climbed intent,
To put the matter through.
But, high aloft, I missed my hold,
And tumbled down below,
A fall I had not reckoned on,
As any one might know.
My little head the foremost came,
And struck a wooden sill,
And there I lay just like one dead,
All stunned, and dazed, and still.
How long it was I do not know,
But when I oped my eyes,

Behold my sheep were viewing me
With evident surprise.
Then slowly rising on my feet,
I felt my head was sore,
And lo, the blood came trickling down
My cheek all red with gore.
And I was scared to find it so,
And slowly took my way
To tell my mother of my plight,
And see what she would say.
She saw her little boy before
He reached the kitchen door,
And hurried out to learn his woes,
His troubles to explore.
She saw that blood was on his face;
It touched her tender heart;
She gently took him by the hand,
Condolence to impart.
And then I told her how it was,
And how my head was hurt,
And showed her all my bloody stains
And clothing stained with dirt.
Then right away she washed my face
And told me not to cry,
Then put a plaster on my head,
And bade me down to lie.
'Twas supper-time, and then she gave
To me a special treat,

Of things she knew I liked the best,
And much enjoyed to eat.
Then off to bed I straitly went
And slept till morrow morn,
When, waking up, I wondered why
My head felt so forlorn.
And then I felt the plaster there,
Remembering how it came,
Then dressed myself and went about
As ever much the same.
My wound got well, the plaster off,
I felt right well again,
But where it was, no hair would grow
As you may see quite plain.



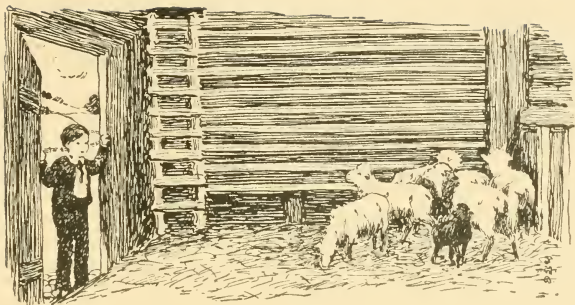
ON HORSEBACK.

In early days 'twas my delight
To drive and ride a horse :
And of the perilous haps I had
This was the greatest source.
With shining coat and noble form
And gentleness and speed,
No animal had half the charm
That graced a gallant steed.
No chance I missed to seize the rein
Or mount a horse's back,
And little thought I of the risk
If prudence I should lack.
And so it was, one summer eve,
When all the work was done,

My father ordered every horse
Out in the field to run.
The field lay quite a space away
A nice stretch for a ride
So every one of father's men
Took each a horse to stride.
I saw them mount, but Prince was left
And bridled for the fun ;
So on his back I scrambled, proud
Out with the rest to run.
No saddles on to hold unto,
Fast sped we down the lane,
And frisky was my chosen pet
As shortly will be plain.
Away I flew, nor danger knew
Till bouncing towards his neck,
Prince took the chance to play a trick
I was too small to check:
For high he kicked, as down a hill
He swiftly made his way,
And I was tossed completely off
But held the reins to stay.
And so I hung beneath his nose
Till coming to a gate,
He stopped, and let me touch the ground,
I'm happy to relate.
No harm was done, except his hoof
Struck gainst one foot of mine
But no such little thing as that
Made me more rides decline.

In proof of this, I'll now relate
Another escapade,
Which happened as I rode on Mike,
Nor was the least afraid.
A letter I was asked to take
About a mile away,
And if I chose, I might ride there
Upon our dappled grey.
Of course I chose to ride the horse,
For he was gay and kind ;
So on his back I sallied forth,
With happiness of mind.
My way was by the old school house
Where a b abs I learned,
And now were scholars gathered there
To morning school returned.
There, girls and boys all whom I knew,
Gazed on me as I rode,
And I was proud, as I discerned
The envy that they showed.
But very sure, it often is,
"Pride goes before a fall;"
And surely you'll have proof of it
When heard my story all.
The road was rough and frozen hard
Where Mike pursued his way,
And there before the children's eyes,
Much to my sore dismay,

He stumbled down upon the ground
With me upon his back,
And fell upon one leg of mine,
Prone on the wagon track.
My other leg was loose enough,
To kick him as he lay,
And this bestowed, he quickly rose
But pinned me down to stay;
For on my leg, he placed his foot,
Shod with an iron shoe,
Until I gave another kick,
When he his foot withdrew.
Meanwhile I tightly held his rein,
And gaining now my feet
I led him to a fence near by,
And on him took my seat.
The ankle that he'd stood upon
Was very sore indeed,
But I did not disclose the fact,
Tho' sadly it did bleed.
And soon I rode beyond the view
Of all the scholars there,
And did the errand sent upon
With a determined air.
Yet still within my heart, I felt,
While jogging on my way,
Quite mortified to think about
What would the children say.



THE BLACK LAMB.

It was in days when I became
Some eight or ten years old,
My father had a dozen sheep
To winter in his fold;
And thinking I had naught to do,
But might serve usefully,
He let me know, if I but chose
His shepherd I might be.
How pleased I was the flock to feed,
And they were pleased with me,
For indian meal and turnips chopped,
It gave them joy to see.
I fed them hay and watered them,
And bedded them with straw,

And proud I was of my white flock,
Whose frisky plays I saw.
Each early morn I hastened out
To see how well they fared,
And gave to them the hearty meal
I had before prepared.
Sometimes I found among the sheep
A little lamb new-born,
And then much pleased, I'd hurry home
The family to inform.
White were the sheep, and white the lambs.
Till came another day,
When in I looked, and something black
Upon the straw there lay,
And what it was, I wondered much,
When to my great surprise,
Upon four feet it stood upright,
And could I doubt my eyes?
Is it a lamb? I asked myself,
And soon I found 'twas so;
For right away its white mamma
For it her love did show.
Then quickly to the house I ran
And told what I had seen,
A little lamb as black as jet!
Whatever could it mean?
"Thou surely art mistaken boy,"
My father calmly said;

But still I held that it was so,
And I was not misled.
“Well, if its black I’ll give it thee,”
My father then replied;
And I was overjoyed to learn
The treasure I’d espied.
Yet hardly did they all believe
The news I to them told,
When I invited all to go
And look into the fold.
And there before their wondering eyes
As black as any crow,
They saw, and could not doubt the fact,
For what we see, we know.
And now I owned a little lamb,
And saw it day by day;
A black and frisky growing lamb
With white ones joined in play.
And I was proud when it grew big,
And long had grown its wool,
For then I had it sheared right off
And filled a big bag full.
The wool I sold, and felt so rich
I now could nice things buy,
A pair of skates, a pocket knife,
Or pretty kite to fly.



THE OWL.

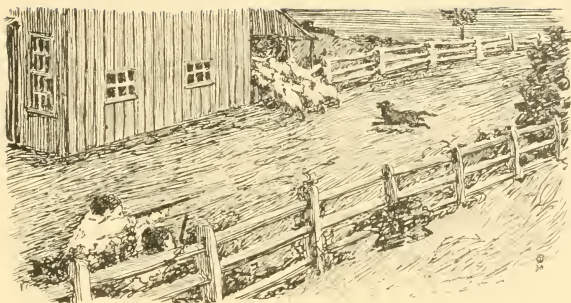
Hear now of the owl,
That queerest of fowl;
A quaint looking bird is he,
With big open eyes
He looks very wise
But only at night can he see.
Two tufts on his head
Like himself, brownish red,
Perhaps you would call them his ears,
But this they are not,
In a different spot
He catches whatever he hears.
In day-time he hides
Where darkness abides,

In cave, or an old hollow tree;
Where he thinks to himself,
I'm a safe little elf,
And no one can ever catch me.
But I was the boy
The wit to employ
To do it, as soon you will see,
For I spied out a nest
An owl then possessed
Within an old apple tree.
I said to myself,
My queer little elf,
I'll catch you as sure as can be;
You screech so at night
My sisters you fright,
And you they shall certainly see.
So a ladder I got,
And climbed to the spot
Which led to his nest in the tree,
Then rolled up my sleeve,
Nor thinking to leave,
Until a caught-owl was he.
I put in my hand,
But came to a stand—
The owl began to show fight;
My hand I withdrew
In haste, it is true—
He bit me a very sharp bite.

So homeward I flew
And what did I do,
But put a thick glove on my hand,
And then I was sure
The owl to secure,
For then, all his bites I could stand.
Again I essayed
The owl-nest to raid,
And lo, what a capture I made!
A pretty red owl,
A wise-looking fowl,
Which, running right home, I displayed.
“Is this the red sprite
That shrieks so at night?”
My sisters then queried with glee;
“’Tis the very same bird”
I said, “you have heard
Way up in the big locust tree.”
They looked him all o’er
Behind and before,
But wondered the most at his eyes;
He gave not a blink,
Nor offered to wink,
And looked very solemn and wise.
Now what shall we do
To keep him in view,
Was what they desired to know;
Said one, in a cage

Put this little sage,
But all of the others said, No,
But placed in the barn
He'd be out of harm;
So into the barn he should go.
'Twould there be so nice,
For he can catch mice,
Which often he seizes for prey;
And there can abide,
In dark places hide
Away from the light of the day.
So out I then went
To do it full bent,
And thought it a sensible freak;
In the barn put the owl,
The grave little fowl,
And saw him fly up to the peak.
What there the owl did
From me was quite hid—
He moused only when it was dark,
And I in my bed
Had pillowed my head,
And could not his doings remark.
One day for a look,
Occasion I took
To view him again as before,
Be he was'nt there,
But probably where

He always had lived theretofore.
And surely that owl
Did view with a scowl,
The boy who had captured him so,
And doubtless did teach
His young ones to screech
Quite fiercely, when viewing their foe,
When under the trees
Enjoying the breeze
At night, any ventured to go.
'Twas thus, Uncle Will
One evening quite still,
Was walking beneath a big tree,
When quick as a flash
An owl made a dash
As close to his head as could be.
And Will did retreat
With hurrying feet
No longer to linger out there;
He verily thought
Lest safety he sought,
His head would be robbed of its hair.
Now wasn't this one
A loyal grandson
Of him that I stole from the tree,
Flew at uncle Will
A pledge to fulfill
His grandpa's avenger to be?



THE KILL-SHEEP DOG.

A tale of my childhood I now will unfold,
Which never in verse, has ever been told.
Another sheep story then let me relate,
Which hearing, 'tis likely your hair will stand straight.
It was a large flock my father had then,
That pastured his fields, nor needed a pen.
He thought it quite safe on warm summer nights,
To let them stay out, not fearing afrights.
A neighbor informed him, that on his own farm,
The dogs on his sheep had inflicted great harm:
These dogs went at night in quest of their prey,
And did in the dark, what they dare not in day.
My father then thought of a very good plan
To save his nice flock ere the evil began.

There was a fine sheep that did lead all the rest,
So to his man Henry, he said "We had best
Just catch the head sheep, on his neck hang a bell
Which when he is running his movements will tell ;
And when in the night we are slumbering in bed,
If dogs chase the sheep by the bell-wether led,
The bell will so jingle we surely will hear,
And go out and shoot them if any appear."
They caught that fine sheep, put on him a bell,
But little foresaw what it would fortell.
Then father's good gun he loaded with care,
And Henry did his; so they were a pair.
"Now Henry," said father, "if you in the night
Should hear the sheep's bell in case of their flight,
Arouse me from bed, and out we will go
And level our guns on the blood-thirsty foe."
To bed they both went; while slumbering there,
A jingle out-doors disturbed the night air,
It jingled so loudly my father awoke,
And Henry arose, when to him he spoke.
Then out they both hurried, in night-gown array,
Two ghostly sharp-shooters, determined to slay
The first naughty dog that came in the way.
They listened awhile, when down the back lane,
The sheep came a running, with might and with main,
The bell-sheep ahead, a ringing his bell,
The others behind him, all rushing pell-mell.
Then father caught sight of a big brindled cur,

A villainous fellow, 'tis safe to infer,
He saw at full speed by the light of the stars,
Right close to the sheep as they leapt o'er the bars.
But just at that moment, loud rang the report
Of father's good gun, which cut his life short.
Thus killed, he could never do harm any more;
So father and man went to bed as before.
But I was asleep at the time it occurred,
Nor heard the sheep-bell, or ever a word,
And when in the morning, I heard them relate
About the bad dog, and what was his fate,
I put on my hat and hastened to see
What kind of a dog a kill-sheep could be.
I timidly went, but judge my surprise,
When on him I looked, he opened his eyes!
A little boy surely was never more scared
Nor ran with a speed so little prepared.
I said to my pa, "Why the dog is not dead,
When on him I looked, he raised up his head!"
Then father said "Surely he fell down so flat
I thought he was killed, and was certain of that.
But if he's alive, that he suffer no more,
Tell Richard to hasten and kill him before
He's able to rise and to wander away
Sheep-killing again at some future day."
So Richard an axe seized quickly, and ran
And finished the killing which father began.
There lay the dead dog, and to take him away,

The boy's undertook, on the very same day.
They harnessed old Bob to my father's red cart,
Then threw in the dog, and away they did start,
And drove to a woods that was standing near by
Then tipped up the cart, and there let him lie.
Anon, in the air flying over the place,
Great birds were seen sailing, all hailing from space.
They circled, and circled, and circled around,
Till downward they swooped and stood on the ground.
And what do you think they proceeded to do?
You scarcely could guess, without taking a view:
Those hungry black buzzards stood by the dead dog
And feasted and fought for their dinners agog—
So full they were gluttoned, they rested a day,
Before they were able to flutter away;
But once on the wing, they vanished from view,
And sailed out of sight, far up in the blue.



SCHOOL DAYS

At Baker's Corner, where I went
In earliest days to school,
Were many happy hours spent,
Taught under school-marm rule.
The little house stood 'neath great oaks,
And out before the door,
Two sassafrases by the road
Made its attractions more.
Close in the rear, great forest trees,
With open range between,
Gave plenteous shade in summer time,
When they were clad in green.
It was indeed ideal ground
For out-door sports and play,

And jolly times the children had
In every fancied way.
A little way across the road
The Baker family dwelt,
Where candy and where ginger cake
To hungry ones were dealt.
A bucket dropped in Baker's well,
By rope and windlass raised,
Supplied the means to quench our thirst,
While down its depths we gazed.
It was a pleasant watering-place,
And oft we lingered there
When sent to draw its crystal draught,
A pailful back to bear.
One bright tin cup alone was used
To serve the children all;
No fear of any bad microbes
Did any one appal.
We all took dinner at the school,
In baskets well supplied,
And on a shelf, placed in a row,
They sat there side by side.
At noon the teacher gave the nod,
And welcomed was the sign,
For all the school at once began
With one accord to dine.
This done, they sallied out to play,
Both boys and girls alike,

And for two hours the joy went on,
Without a bat or bike.
Bull-in-the-pen, Hot-buttered beans,
And many games of ball,
A squirrel chase we often had,
And merry were we all.
We Skinned the cat, and Jumped the rope,
Played Tag, and Prisoners' base,
Or took a turn at Blindman's buff,
Or fleetly ran a race.
Leaf houses, without architect,
We built beneath the trees,
In which we often crept to rest,
And seek a little ease.
The girls kept house in mimic way,
With mossy carpets laid,
While broken bits of china were
Quite tastefully displayed.
The cherry tree which stood near by,
Its fruit more prized than pearls,
The boys climbed up to shower down
On aprons of the girls.
And looking toward my father's farm,
Its fields in easy view,
There might be seen a row of men
The harvest putting through.
They swung their scythes in rhythmic stroke,
And laid the clover low,

And when their blades were fairly dull
And quite unfit to mow,
They would their scythes on handle stand,
And then apply the stone,
Which in a pouch about him girt
Each man possessed his own.
'Twas then rang out the sounding scythe,
A once familiar sound,
A music now quite obsolete,
With no successor found.
And other sounds, the jangling bells
That hiding cows betrayed,
And tinkling ones upon the sheep
A dreamy music made.
How often as we sat in school
These sounds made entrance there,
And other sounds more exquisite
Came floating through the air;
The bluejay rang a piercing note
Atop some mighty tree,
And many were the birds which sang
That seldom now we see:
There thrilled the wild wood-robin's note,
From out some leafy shade,
And sweeter than his roundelay
Was never music made.
I like to think of those old days,
And pleasures then enjoyed,

While seldom with unpleasant things
Were ever they alloyed.
Yet youth nor age is quite exempt
From trouble now and then,
And I remember well my case,
Which I'll proceed to pen.
In school we had our daily tasks —
We wrote and ciphered, too ;
We read aloud, ranged in a class,
The very best we knew.
We even sketched in indian ink,
And made collections rare
From poets now of old renown,
To be preserved with care.
It was sometimes our teacher's pride
To have a marked display
From those whose best acquirement
In any lesson lay.
She thought, as now seems very clear,
That it would charm the rest
If two of us would read aloud
In concert, at our best.
She chose the brightest girl for one,
But who should be her mate ?
Alas ! how badly then I felt
To find it was *my* fate.
To take my stand upon the floor
Erect by Lydia's side,

My bashfulness could hardly bear,
And I was sorely tried.
While waiting thus, great silence reigned,
For now the children all
Were anxious to enjoy the treat
Which from our lips should fall.
I now forget the chosen piece,
But most, my mind inclines,
To think it was what Goldsmith wrote,
Beginning with these lines :
“ *Remote, unfriended, melancholy, slow,
Beside the lazy Scheld, or wandering Po.* ”
These words, perchance, gave added force
To all I felt within,
As more unfriended, or more slow,
I think I’ve seldom been.
We started fair, but shall I tell
The sequel of it all,
And how I balked, then fully stopped,
And what did me befall?
My utterance failed, I could not read,
Though Lydia pity showed ;
She was more brave, and but for me
Her words had sweetly flowed.
The teacher vexed, her order vain,
She now resolved to try
To stimulate my faculties,
And punishment apply.

The ferule handiest to use,
A ruler on her desk,
She reached, and came right straight to me,
Nor wasted words expressed.
I saw what fate was surely mine,
When aimed that ruler so,
And quickly put my book behind,
To ward the coming blow.
The book it struck, instead of me,
And broken thus in twain,
No more was it an instrument
To ever use again.
Quite failing thus to have her way,
The teacher let me go,
But promised at some future day,
As I would surely know,
To get a ruler strong enough
To make my language flow.
I had a little sister there,
Who saw my sorry plight,
With bosom filled with sympathy,
And sobs and tears bedight.
But I became a hero now,
Although I did not read,
And ever after I was blessed
Such duty to be freed.
And teacher, too, soon quite forgot
The promise that she made,

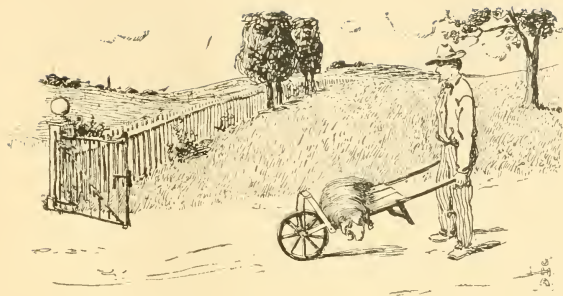
And so henceforth were happy all,
With none to make afraid.
The birds still sang upon the trees,
The mower whet his scythe,
The cow-bells echoed through the woods,
Now joyous all, and blithe.
That summer was a jolly time,
As backward now I look,
And think how I escaped a blow,
By placing right a book.



HOW WISDOM BEGAN.

What once there befel me, when older I grew,
You are welcome to hear, if it interests you.
I then enjoyed viewing the crops on the farm,
And ever was ready to shield them from harm.
My faithful dog Dukko would follow me round,
Whenever I walked to survey the tilled ground.
One day, so it happened, we went to the field,
Where wheat, newly sown, in green sprouts was revealed.
Oh, how my heart bounded at seeing the change,
To think of the beauty 'twould add to the grange.
Just then a new object my vision engaged,
A rooster led flock that my feelings enraged.
This gay chanticleer just swung his claws there,

And tore up the wheat with a satisfied air!
Impatient I was, to charge on the foe,
And to my dog Duko I gave the word, "Go!"
"Catch, catch!" I exclaimed, "Catch, catch, you dumb brute,
And rushed towards the fowls in a wrathful pursuit.
But Duko, it seems, the point didn't see,
And on me he leaped with intensified glee.
Then, balked in my efforts, and fairly distraught,
Redress for my trials in Duko I sought.
"You scamp," I said, loudly, "I'll teach you what's what!"
And where for to kick him I searched for a spot.
I kicked! unimpeded my foot flew in air,
And it went very high, for the dog wasn't there!
If Duko'd been hit, it might have been well,
But I was unbalanced, and flatly I fell.
My father, unknown to me, witnessed it all
And laughed with a laughter 'tis sad to recall.
The rooster, meanwhile, in the gallantest way,
Kept on scratching seeds from out the loose clay.
Though all was so painful, and foiled was my plan
I learned that from trouble, man's wisdom began.



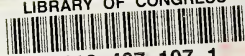
A PIG TALE.

When grown into manhood, and I had become
A farmer at Linden, and that was my home,
A cousin called on me, a farmer as well,
When something that happened I'm going to tell:
Linden was lovely that bright summer's day,
The lawn with its trees and its floral display.
Much pleasure it gave me to welcome my guest,
And warm words of greeting were duly expressed.
Then, seated in converse on many affairs,
We pleasantly rocked in the easy hall chairs;
On matters of church and matters of state,
We kept for a while a running debate;
At length our pet subject of rural employ
Asserted itself as the best to enjoy.

Then out for surveying the sights of the farm
Together we went to partake of the charm,
Now, when we had gone but a rod from the door,
An object unwelcome we saw just before:
It was a fine hog with a dignified air
Enjoying the lawn—Oh, how did he dare!
I own I was vexed as this grunter I saw,
And proceeded at once to meet out the law :
I called to old Banquo to chase out the brute
And added my own to my watchdog's pursuit.
My cousin I told how I'd suffered of late
From neighboring hogs running on my estate;
And this very one had been there before
With mischief portrayed on the nose that he bore.
My cousin helped chase the naughty estray
Who always declined to go the right way;
For up and then down through bushes and ferns
We chased him with vigor worth better returns.
The weather was hot and exhausted at last
The hog laid him down, for his breathing was fast.
There lay the fat porker, some two hundred pounds—
How now should we hustle him out of the grounds?
Just then I bethought of a nice little plan
And called to my service a muscular man.
A barrow was ordered, the hog on it laid,
And out on the turnpike was safely conveyed.
There, dumped on the ground supinely he lay,
While we sauntered on our prearranged way.

We looked on the acres of corn and of wheat,
The meadows so green, and the clover so sweet,
The frisking of lambs, and the highly-bred kine,
The chickens and ducks and even the swine.
Then slowly retracing our steps to the lawn,
To an unwelcome sight our attention was drawn:
For, would you believe it, that very same hog
In face of ourselves and Banquo the dog,
Walked boldly before us, nor doubted his right
And grunted a grunt of especial delight.
Too much to behold, was his swaggering way,
And I knitted my brow at the saucy display.
Just then my man Patrick appeared on the scene,
To whom now aroused, I imparted my spleen.
This man had the care of my many fat swine,
And knew all their faces and burly outline :
He looked at me smiling, and then at the dog
And quietly uttered, " Why boss, that's your hog."
To a shepherd his sheep are never incog;
Why then should a farmer not know his own hog?

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